

Fire district measure passes overwhelmingly

DAVID SHOWERS
The Sentinel-Record

Residents inside the Lake Hamilton Volunteer Fire Department's jurisdiction approved the formation of a fire district in Tuesday's special election by a three-to-one margin, enabling the

department to list its annual dues on real property tax bills.

Residents voted 356-113 in favor of the measure, according to the unofficial tally. The total represented almost 8 percent of the more than 6,000 people who were eligible to cast ballots and in-

cluded 35 votes from Hot Spring County, part of which is inside the department's 44-square-mile service area.

Election day voting at department headquarters on Highway 290 outpaced five days of early voting at the Garland County Election Commission building

by four to one, with 286 election day voters supporting the measure compared to 83 opposing it. Early voting was 68-29 in favor of the district's formation, and two of the three absentee ballots cast were also in the affirmative.

The Election Commission will meet

Wednesday to certify the results. Commission Chairman Gene Haley said the department will be billed for the cost of the election.

Deputy Chief Doug Davey said Tuesday night that the secure revenue

DISTRICT, PAGE 8A



The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

STEPPING DOWN: Hot Springs National Park Superintendent Josie Fernandez, at the south end of Bathhouse Row on Wednesday, has announced her intent to retire from the National Park Service at the end of March after 14 years with Hot Springs National Park.

HSNP superintendent announces retirement

LINDSEY WELLS
The Sentinel-Record

After a 25-year career with the National Park Service, 14 of those in Hot Springs, Josie Fernandez, superintendent of Hot Springs National Park, announced on Wednesday that she will retire at the end of March.

After joining the Park Service in 1993 and working in New York and Pennsylvania, Fernandez was appointed as Hot Springs National Park superintendent in 2004, marking her stint in Arkansas as the longest period of time she has spent living or working in one location. Fernandez made history as Hot Springs' first female national park superintendent.

"This is the longest that I have lived anywhere, period, in my entire life. The longest job I've held and the longest that I've lived anywhere, so it's been an honor and a privilege, absolutely," she said.

Parallel to her career with the Park Service, Fernandez held a second career as a

lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve until her retirement in September 2016 after nearly 40 years of service.

"The 'r-word', the retirement word, has been in my head from at least 2016 because that was my first retirement," she said. "I've always heard people that are wiser than me say, 'You'll know it when it's time,' and all of a sudden it was time. I started in the Air Force on active duty, so two uniforms, two different careers — there comes a point in your life where you realize that you've done all that you can and the energy of a new generation is needed to continue the job."

When Fernandez assumed the role of HSNP superintendent in 2004, she said one of her main goals was to rehabilitate the six empty bath houses in downtown Hot Springs and, more importantly, make them marketable to private sector partners who would invest in that vision. With only one of six of those bath houses still unoccupied,

SUPERINTENDENT, PAGE 4A

School shooting leaves at least 17 people dead

TERRY SPENCER
KELLI KENNEDY
The Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. — A former student opened fire at a Florida high school Wednesday, killing at least 17 people and sending scores of students fleeing into the streets in the nation's deadliest school shooting since a gunman attacked an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut.

The shooter, who was equipped with a gas mask and smoke grenades, set off a fire alarm to draw students out of their classrooms shortly before the school day ended, officials said.

Authorities offered no immediate details on the 19-year-old suspect or any possible motive, except to say that he had been expelled for disciplinary reasons.

Frantic parents rushed to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to find SWAT team members and ambulances surrounding the campus. Live footage showed emergency workers who appeared to be treating the wounded on sidewalks.

SCHOOL, PAGE 6A



The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

SHOOTING SCENE: From left, Garland County sheriff's Investigator Kenny Ford, Deputy Elwood McConnell, Capt. Gary Ashcraft and Cpl. Brandon Huckaba converse at the scene of a shooting early Wednesday in which a 17-year-old was reportedly injured.

Teen shot in Percy; 2 arrested

FROM STAFF REPORTS

An 18-year-old male was arrested Wednesday afternoon in connection with the shooting of a 17-year-old male earlier in the day at a residence in the 400 block of Ryan Road in Percy, the Garland County Sheriff's Department said.

Keonte Rauls, 18, who lists a School Street address, was charged with first-degree battery, a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison. The victim's mother, Lessie Galo, 37, was also arrested on outstanding warrants and two firearms violations stemming from firearms she allegedly had in her possession, the department said

ARRESTED, PAGE 4A

Group of senators reaches immigration deal on Dreamers, wall

ALAN FRAM
KEVIN FREKING
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A group of senators reached a bipartisan agreement Wednesday aimed at balancing Demo-

crats' fight to offer citizenship to young "Dreamer" immigrants with President Donald Trump's demands for billions to build his border wall with Mexico, lawmakers said.

But though the measure sprang

from around two dozen senators with centrist views on the issue and was winning support from many Democrats, it faced an uncertain fate.

While not specifically mentioning the bipartisan pact, Trump urged

lawmakers to oppose any plan that doesn't meet his more stringent demands, which include curbs on legal immigration and the abolition of a visa lottery. The Senate's No. 2 Republican, John Cornyn of Texas, warned that law-

makers need to address Trump's entire proposal, saying, "We need to take the president seriously."

There were also qualms among Democrats. The party's No. 2 Senate

IMMIGRATION, PAGE 4A

Texas man sentenced to 17 years in prison for armed robberies

STEVEN MROSS
The Sentinel-Record

A Texas man was sentenced to 17 years in prison Tuesday after pleading guilty to two armed robberies that occurred in June 2015 involving Hot Springs businesses, including a gas station and a video game store.



Owens

Jerry Lee Owens, 42, who has remained in custody since his arrest Dec. 30, 2015, appeared in Garland County Circuit Court with his attorney, William M.

Howard Jr., of Pine Bluff, and pleaded guilty to two counts of aggravated robbery, punishable by up to life in prison, and was sentenced to 17 years on each count, to run concurrently.

Owens, who lists an Irving, Texas, address, pleaded guilty on Jan. 9 in Saline County to the armed robbery of a Murphy USA gas station in Bryant that occurred on the same day as the gas station robbery in Hot Springs. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison with that sentence to also run concurrently with his sentences in Garland County.

Deputy Prosecutor Kara Petro said Wednesday because of

ROBBERIES, PAGE 8A

ASH WEDNESDAY



The Sentinel-Record/Grace Brown

The Rev. C.B. Baker administers ashes to Sue Harris during the noon Ash Wednesday service at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season, a time when Christians commit to acts of penitence and prayer in preparation for Easter Sunday.

2nd man sentenced in purse snatching

STEVEN MROSS
The Sentinel-Record

The second of two Malvern men arrested in 2016 after assaulting a woman at a Hot Springs gas station and stealing her purse pleaded guilty Tuesday in Garland County Circuit Court.

Javonte Jone Jones, 24, pleaded guilty to felony robbery and was sentenced to eight years in prison, while an additional felony charge of second-degree battery was withdrawn. A permanent order barring Jones from any contact with the victim was also issued.

His accomplice, Isaiah Keyun Boyce, 19, pleaded guilty Dec. 4, 2017, to robbery and was sentenced to 10 years, and second-degree battery and was sentenced to three years, with the sentences to run concurrently.

Both men had remained in custody since their arrest Nov. 16, 2016, the day of the robbery.

According to the affidavit, on Nov. 16, around 5:30 p.m., Garland County sheriff's Deputy Andrew Goodman responded to the Corner Store, 4198 Malvern Ave., and



Jones

SENTENCED, PAGE 8A



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**CHANCE OF SHOWERS.
HIGHS IN LOWER 70S.
LOWS IN MID 50S.**

SUNRISE: 6:59 A.M.
SUNSET: 5:57 P.M.



FRIDAY:
HIGH 57° LOW 35°

SATURDAY:
HIGH 47° LOW 37°

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Quote of the day

"We live by encouragement and die without it — slowly, sadly and angrily."

Celeste Holm, American actress (1917-2012)